
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 585 Session of
2019

INTRODUCED BY KENYATTA, HILL-EVANS, KOSIEROWSKI, SANCHEZ,
KINSEY, SAPPEY, ROEBUCK, BIZZARRO, HARRIS, KORTZ, SAMUELSON,
DIGIROLAMO, PETRARCA, ULLMAN, MILLARD, T. DAVIS, McCLINTON,
HOHENSTEIN, DAWKINS, DALEY, STRUZZI, KIM, ZABEL, BULLOCK,
DeLUCA, MALAGARI, SCHLOSSBERG AND SCHWEYER, OCTOBER 22, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, OCTOBER 22, 2019

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the life and accomplishments of Toni Morrison.

2 WHEREAS, Chloe Anthony Wofford "Toni" Morrison, an American
3 literary icon, died on August 5, 2019, following complications
4 of pneumonia; and

5 WHEREAS, Toni was born Chloe Ardelia Wofford on February 18,
6 1931, in Lorain, Ohio, to George and Ella Ramah Wofford; and

7 WHEREAS, At 12 years of age, Toni joined the Roman Catholic
8 Church and took on the baptismal name Anthony, serving as the
9 seed for the nickname Toni, which she became known as during her
10 collegiate career; and

11 WHEREAS, After graduating from Howard University in 1953 and
12 completing graduate studies at Cornell University in 1955, Toni
13 taught English for two years at Texas Southern University before
14 returning to Howard University as a faculty member; and

15 WHEREAS, Toni married Harold Morrison in 1958, though the
16 marriage only lasted until 1964 after which time she moved to

1 New York with her sons and accepted an editorial position with
2 Random House where she would work with Angela Davis, Gayl Jones,
3 Toni Cade Bambara and Muhammad Ali; and

4 WHEREAS, Toni published her first book, "The Bluest Eye," in
5 1970, which went on to be listed by the City University of New
6 York as required reading in its black-studies department; and

7 WHEREAS, Over the course of her life, Toni authored 11
8 novels, as well as children's books and essay collections, and
9 her work is remembered for its exploration of black identity in
10 the United States; and

11 WHEREAS, Toni was a rare author whose books garnered both
12 critical and commercial success, appearing regularly on the New
13 York Times best-seller list while also serving as the subject of
14 numerous critical studies; and

15 WHEREAS, Toni's most lauded writings include "Song of
16 Solomon," which received the National Book Critics Circle Award
17 in 1977 and "Beloved," which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1988; and

18 WHEREAS, In 1993, Toni became the first black woman to win
19 the Nobel Prize in Literature and, in 2012, she received the
20 Presidential Medal of Freedom; and

21 WHEREAS, Toni's writing tapped into the psychological impact
22 of slavery while offering insight into the soul of black
23 America; and

24 WHEREAS, Toni's gripping prose continues to resonate in our
25 society, as she wrote, "[f]reeing yourself was one thing;
26 claiming ownership of that freed self was another"; therefore be
27 it

28 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives honor the life
29 and accomplishments of Toni Morrison; and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives extend its

1 deepest condolences to the surviving family members and friends
2 of Toni Morrison.